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THE MUSLIM SUNRISE

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From Church to Mosque

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THE MUSLIM SUNRISE

The Muslim Sunrise is the official journal of the American Fazl Mosque. It features articles written by renowned scholars. The magazine is open for discussion on Islam as well as topics relating to other religions. It highlights the role of Islam in a changing environment. It provides a platform for public opinion on current problems confronting humanity and their solution. This within the context of understanding the basic purpose of life here and hereafter. Opinions expressed in this magazine may not necessarily be those of the American Fazl Mosque.

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***Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, The Promised Messiah
Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam (1835-1908)***

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was born in 1835 in Qadian, a small village in India which lacked all facilities for communication with the rest of the world. He received very little formal education but was richly endowed with knowledge by Almighty God. He wrote more than 80 books which are a treasurehouse of knowledge and divine light.

In March, 1889, Hazrat Ahmad laid the foundation of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam when he proclaimed to be the Promised Messiah, the expected Reformer of the age. This Movement was inaugurated to revive faith in God, to collect under one banner all the true lovers of peace and to inculcate among them the spirit of tolerance, good will, and true brotherhood.

Hazrat Ahmad passed away in 1908 and the Ahmadiyya Movement has since been guided by his successors chosen by an electoral college. The present Head of the Movement, elected in 1982, is Sahibzada Mirza Tahir Ahmad. The International Headquarters are located in Rabwah, Pakistan.

FULFILMENT OF PROPHECIES ABOUT THE PROMISED MESSIAH

(Mostafa Sabet)

Prophecies are part of the unseen which true believers and righteous people are required to believe in. Yet, one may not be able to understand the meaning of a prophecy until the prophecy itself is actually fulfilled. Prophecies describe facts and events which take place in the future, yet generally, they are mentioned in symbolic, metaphoric or unclear language. People tend to take prophecies in their literal meaning, thus they fail to comprehend the true meaning of the prophecies and refuse to accept the fulfilment of a prophecy when it is actually fulfilled.

The Holy Quran tells us that the Torah and the Injeel contain prophecies about the Holy Prophet of Islam, peace and blessings of God be on him. Yet when we search the Torah and the Injeel for those prophecies, we never find any clear-cut prophecy about the Holy Prophet, but all are mentioned in symbolic or metaphoric language. The Holy Quran affirms this fact by mentioning how Jesus prophesied about the advent of the Holy Prophet:

وَمُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُ أَحْمَدُ

"...and giving glad tidings of a Messenger who will come after me. His name will be Ahmad."

We know that the name given to the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be on him, the name by which he was mentioned in the Holy Quran and was addressed by God and by all people since he was born till he passed away. We know his name which is used in the articles of faith, in the call to prayers and in all references to the Holy Prophet, and that name is Muhammad, not Ahmad. *Ahmad* is an attributive name of the Holy Prophet, not his actual name. Why Jesus mentioned an attribute of the Holy Prophet and did not mention clearly his actual name? Because prophecies relate to the unseen (الغيب) and when the unseen finally unfolds its mystery and manifests its truth, it is discerned only by the righteous eye and accepted only by the true believing heart. Had it been otherwise, i.e., if the prophecies were mentioned in a clear

language and are fulfilled in their obvious and literal meaning, then they will be believed by all, believers and unbelievers alike, righteous and unrighteous. They would have lost their distinctive features which differentiate between believers and unbelievers and would have been reduced into simple facts, just like forecasted time of rising and setting of the sun or the time-schedules of departure and arrival of trains and buses.

Prophecies about the Promised Messiah are of similar nature. They are also mentioned in a symbolic, metaphoric or attributive language. If we were to take them literally and wait for their fulfilment in the way we imagine them to be fulfilled in their literal sense, then we will wait as long as the Jews have waited for the fulfilment of the prophecies about their awaited Promised Messiah. We know that the Jews were awaiting the advent of a promised one, the Messiah, whom they expected to come as a great king. He was supposed to wage war against the Romans, the occupiers of the country, and to deliver his people of the atrocities of their persecutors, the Romans, who imposed upon them heavy taxes. They awaited the literal fulfillment of their prophecies which speak of the descending of Elijah the prophet from the skies as a sign for the advent of the Messiah.

They kept looking in the skies waiting for Elijah to descend but the Messiah came and Elijah never descended from the sky. When the disciples of the Messiah asked him about the fulfilment of that prophecy, he interpreted it to mean that someone like Elijah will be sent by God and that the prophecy was actually fulfilled in the person of Yahya or John the Baptist who was known to have been born of a woman and did not descend physically from the skies.

The prophecies portrayed the Messiah as a powerful king but Jesus explained: "My kingdom is not of this world". The prophecies described the Messiah as a warrior who was going to obliterate his enemies but Jesus taught: "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you". The prophecies spoke of a deliverer who was going to relieve the Jews of their burdens, the heaviest of which was paying the high taxes to Caesar, but Jesus admonished: "Render to Caesar that which is due to Caesar and render to God that which is due to God". The few righteous Jews who were able to understand the philosophy and the nature of the

prophecies accepted the interpretation of Jesus, while those who were bereft of righteousness, who insisted in taking the prophecies in their literal sense, are waiting until now for the advent of their Promised Messiah.

The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be on him, warned his followers that they also will behave exactly like the Jews and the Christians. This warning can also mean that when the Promised Messiah comes, some Muslims will behave like the Jews and insist on the literal fulfilment of the prophecies, thus they will refuse to accept the Promised One and will deny his advent; while few among the Muslims will accept the interpretation of those prophecies related to the advent of the Promised Messiah, thus those few Muslims will be similar to the early Christians who accepted Jesus to be the true Messiah.

There are so many prophecies related to the advent of the Promised Messiah, prophecies describing the signs of his time, describing the East to be his dwelling place, describing the similarity between him and Jesus Christ and calling him by the name Jesus son of Mary, describing his lineage to the family of the Holy Prophet through his daughter Fatima, even describing his physical features, his complexion, his face and his hair. In short, there are numerous prophecies related to the advent of the Promised Messiah, yet, history repeats its sad story which is repeated every time a Reformer is sent by God. The majority of people who are anxiously awaiting the advent of their promised one, tend to take these prophecies in their literal sense and refuse to accept the awaited one when he finally makes his appearance.

Time limitations restrict me from indulging in a detailed explanation of the numerous prophecies about the Promised Messiah and how they were fulfilled, however, there are some which are seriously misunderstood by most people and this misunderstanding is the stumbling block in their way of acceptance of the Promised Messiah.

The first of these prophecies was related by the Holy Prophet:

كَيْفَ تَهْلِكُ أُمَّةٌ أَنَا أَوَّلُهَا دَعَيْتُ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ آخِرُهَا

“How can a nation perish to which I was sent at its beginning and to which the Messiah, Son of Mary, will be sent at the end?”

Taken literally, this prophecy and many similar ones, were understood to mean that the same Jesus, Son of Mary, who was a Jew and was sent only to the Jews, that same Jesus is alive now in the skies. He will descend with his physical body from the skies in the latter days to spread Islam in the whole world since he is the only one who can convince the Christians that he was not the Son of God, and can convince the Jews that they did not crucify him. Then all will join Islam which will finally become victorious on earth.

So many books have been written to refute the misunderstanding of the physical return of Jesus and to explain that those prophecies meant that someone from among the followers of the Holy Prophet who enjoys some similarities with Jesus, Son of Mary, will appear in the latter days to bring about the victory of Islam. It is very unfortunate that the people who take these prophecies in their literal sense and insist upon the physical descent of the old Jesus from the skies do not realize that they believe in an enormity which is insulting to the Holy Quran, insulting to the whole of the Muslim world, insulting to the honor of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be on him, and insulting to God Himself.

It is insulting to the Holy Quran because the Holy Quran has clearly limited the mission of Jesus Christ to be only for the Children of Israel, the Jews, not to the whole world. To expect the same old Jesus to come to spread Islam in the whole world is to hold a belief in clear contradiction to the Holy Quran. It is also insulting to all the Muslim world, to every individual among the Muslims, as it meant that none among the Muslims, not a single individual was able or capable of carrying the mission which the alleged old Jesus was supposed to carry out. It is insulting to the Holy Prophet because it meant that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be on him, was able only to bring Islam in the world but when it came to bringing about the ultimate victory of Islam, it needed an Israelite prophet to achieve that victory.

It is insulting to God Himself, because the people holding such beliefs say, though not in the same words, but practically their beliefs amount to mean that although God was the Almighty and the All-Powerful, yet He realized that He would not be able to protect Jesus from his enemies as long as Jesus was living on earth, as if the earth had become suddenly beyond the domain of God.

God was able to save Noah from the flood and destroy his enemies. He was able to save Abraham from the fire and destroy his enemies. He was able to save Moses from Pharaoh and to destroy his enemies. Yet, in the mind of those people who hold such beliefs, God seemed to have lost His power when He had to confront the Jews on earth. He seemed to have lost His ability to extend His protection to His Messiah as long as he was living on earth. He seemed to have been unable to help His prophet to migrate to another part of the earth as He had done with the previous prophets. It was as if God felt that the whole wide earth was under the influence of His enemies while His own influence was confined only to the skies so He decided to take Jesus to the skies to save him from his enemies. What an absurdity! What an enormity those people ascribe to God!

Again, they claim by their tongues that the Holy Prophet was the greatest among the prophets and was the lord and master of all mankind, yet, in their minds, they believe that his life became useless so God terminated it. But Jesus' life was so valuable that God kept him alive for 2000 years because he would be able to accomplish a mission which no one else can accomplish, none from among the Companions or Reformers, not even the Holy Prophet himself. What a shame!!

When we Ahmadi Muslims declare to the world that Jesus has died like all other prophets, they call us *Kafirs* (unbelievers). When we explain that the prophecy about the advent of the Messiah meant that someone from among the servants of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be on him, will be raised to the status of the Messiah, Jesus Son of Mary, in order to prove the superiority and the high station of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be on him, they consider us outside the pale of Islam.

Another interesting prophecy related to the advent of the Promised Messiah is the prophecy about the Dajjal (the antichrist) and his donkey. There are numerous prophecies describing the Dajjal and his wonders and also describing the wonders of his donkey. Taken in their literal sense, these prophecies are reduced to amusing tales and myths, while taken metaphorically, they present to us great signs of the time of the latter days, the time of the advent of the Promised Messiah.

The prophecies speak of a one-eyed creature who works

miracles and move about on a gigantic donkey. This creature will spread evil on earth and will have control over all the treasures of the world. His donkey is so large in size that its head is higher than the clouds. When it goes through the sea the water will reach only to its knees. It runs with a speed like that of the wind and can jump from the East and land in the West. When it moves it makes a sound which is heard in the East and the West. It does not consume grass or vegetables but consumes fire and water. People do not ride on its back but in its belly.

If we were to take these prophecies literally we would present a fiction which would have reduced Hollywood production of King Kong to a dwarf. The Japanese gotzella and their other monsters will be like small ants beside the Dajjals' donkey. Just imagine a monster donkey whose height can reach twenty or thirty thousand feet and think what kind of mother donkey gave birth to such an animal! Imagine a one-eyed creature who goes all over the world spreading evil and enslaving the people by controlling their economy and owning the treasures of the world. Think what would have happened to the super powers with their arsenals of nuclear arms and their Star Wars programs, why would they hand over their treasures to the Dajjal and why would they accept enslavement to him!!

From any angle one may look at these prophecies one must conclude that they cannot be taken in their literal sense. The Dajjal metaphorically represent the materialistic and the misleading philosophies and isms which spread evil in the world. The Dajjal simbolizes the people who are technologically advanced yet religiously blind. The donkey is also a symbolic representation of the means of transportation which will be used in the latter days.

You may have noticed that there are four distinctive features of that symbolic donkey: Firstly, the large size. Secondly, the speed of movement. Thirdly, the consumption of fire and water or internal combustion. Fourthly, the wide range of travelling from the East to the West and vice versa.

When we really think of it we find that less than two hundred years ago, only two hundred years ago, man was using the same means of transportation used by man for the past four thousand years, namely, animals or carriages driven by animals on land, and boats driven by rows and sails in sea. Four thousand years

had passed and man kept using the same means of transportation until only two hundred years ago when new means of transportation started to be invented, all characterized by the four features of the Dajjal's donkey: The large size, the high speed, the internal combustion and the long distances covered. How wonderful that though these prophecies were uttered by the Holy Prophet fourteen hundred years ago yet they accurately describe the means of transportation used in our time. Isn't that a great proof which adds to the truth of the Holy Prophet of Islam! Strange enough that when we Ahmadi Muslims interpret these prophecies in a way which add to the glory and truth of Islam, we are thrown by other Muslims outside the pale of Islam!!

I would not like to end before mentioning another prophecy which speaks of one of the major signs of the latter days, namely, the rising of the sun from the west. Let us consider the literal fulfilment of this prophecy and see what the result will be.

We know that the sun does not revolve around the earth, hence the sun does not actually rise or set but it appears to do so due to the spinning of the earth around its axis. For the sun to appear to be rising from the west, the earth should stop spinning in its present direction and start spinning in the opposite direction. Keeping in mind that the earth spins with a speed exceeding 1040 mile per hour, then we must calculate the time required by the earth to decelerate till it reaches the zero speed then to spin in the opposite direction till it reaches its present speed.

The time required is calculated in billions of years, i.e., it takes billions of years to stop spinning and it takes billions of years to reach the same speed in the opposite direction. Thus this possibility is out of the question.

There are two other possibilities: Firstly, that the earth should stop suddenly and spin in the other direction in a matter of minutes or hours. The result of this sudden stop can be understood if we imagine what happens to a driver who is driving a car without wearing seat belts and travelling with a speed of only a hundred miles an hour, and then the car suddenly stopped. We know that the driver will keep moving and will fly through the windshield. Similarly, if the earth stopped suddenly, then all the mountains, the oceans and all the people will fly away in the air and the earth will explode. There will be nothing left of it to spin

in the other direction.

The other alternative for the sun to appear to be rising from the west is that both the north and the south poles should change places while the earth keeps spinning in the same direction with the same speed. But this transposition of the poles means that each of the poles has to travel a distance of about 12,500 miles. Again, if the speed of the additional movement is sudden, it will have the same effect of the sudden stop of the earth and if it is gradual it requires billions of years.

Over and above, the literal fulfilment of this prophecy contradicts the Holy Quran which affirms:

لَا الشَّمْسُ يَنْبَغِي لَهَا أَنْ تُدْرِكَ الْقَمَرَ وَلَا اللَّيْلُ
سَابِقُ النَّهَارِ وَكُلٌّ فِي فَلَكٍ يَنْبَغُونَ

"It is not permissible for the sun to approach the moon, nor may the night outstrip the day. All glide along in an orbit." (36:41)

Thus the prophecy cannot be literally fulfilled, otherwise the night will outstrip the day in half of the world and the day will outstrip the night in the other half.

The logical interpretation of the prophecy is that the sun of knowledge will rise from the west, for light usually represents knowledge while darkness represents ignorance. It may also mean that the sun of Islam which rose from the East in the time of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be on him, will rise from the West in the time of the Promised Messiah. It can also mean that the standard of morals and principles in the world will be reversed, an interpretation which is also supported by many other prophecies.

I may relate here a personal experience in which I have seen the sun apparently rising from the west. I was in a plane in Heathrow airport waiting for the take-off which was scheduled to take place at half past eight. The sunset on that day was at 8:25. So, I decided to offer my *Maghrib* (sunset prayer) and *Isha* (evening prayer) prayers as soon as the plane moved, since I knew that at the take-off time, every passenger will be tied down to his seat and I would not be disturbed during my Prayers by a stewardess or by a neighboring passenger. When I finished my *Maghrib* prayer, the plane had already taken off, but to my surprise, I saw the rays of the sun flooding the cabin. I realized that because of the quick

rising of the plane, the sun which seemed to have set while we were on the ground seemed to have risen again when we went up. Certainly, the pilot in the cockpit would have seen the sun rising from the west. Today there are jets which can fly at a speed which exceeds that of the earth. The earth spins at a speed of about 1000 mile an hour while the jets can fly at 2000 or 2500 miles per hour. If one of those jets travelled from London to New York starting from London one hour after sun-set, it will reach New York two hours before sunset. In other words, the pilot would be able to see on his way, the sun rising from the west.

Thus when we study all the prophecies about the advent of the Promised Messiah, we will find that they have all been fulfilled. It is only for the righteous eye to discern the truth and only for the purified and humble heart to accept it. Blessed is he who can see and blessed is he who can understand.



A renowned scholar of the sub-continent, Sayyed Mohammad Sibtain As-Sarsawi, writes on page 507 of his book:

“Only those people can testify and recognize the Mahdi and supersede in his fellowship and obedience who are believers in the true sense of the word. And those who are expecting him will not come forward to accept and obey him until they wait for his appearance reslessly. If it is not so they, on the other hand, will resort to opposition and enmity. They will make attempts to torture him and persecute his followers. The Ulema will issue fatwas for his murder and rulers of some Republics will send troops to murder him. All such people will be Muslims.”



THE RELIGIOUS TRADITION OF ISLAM: THERE IS NO COMPULSION IN RELIGION

(Sheikh Mubarak Ahmad)

[From March 15 - 17, 1987, A colloquy was held on the campus of Wilson college in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. The topic of this colloquy was: "Religious traditions and the limits of tolerance."]

The participants included professors of religions, ministers, rabbis, students and scholars from different states as well as Canada. Among the speakers were Doctors Borelli (Roman Catholic), Anita Ioas (Baha'i), Chaumont (Unification Church), Freeman (United Church of Christ), Gehris (American Baptist), Glassman (Zen Buddhist), Goldenberg (Secular Jewish Atheist), Gustafson (Lutheran), Mittleman (Jewish), Saini (Hindu), Stolfus (Mennonite), Teague (Southern Baptist), and Ugolnik (Eastern Orthodox). The religion of Islam was represented by Imam Sheikh Mubarak Ahmad, Amir and Muballigh Incharge, the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, USA.

This colloquy was sponsored by Gettysburg College, Wilson College and the Pennsylvania Humanities Council. The chief organizers of this colloquy were Professor Louis Hammann of Gettysburg College and Professor Harry Buck (Retired) of Wilson College.

We reproduce below the text of the speech of the Amir and Muballigh Incharge, Sheikh Mubarak Ahmad, on this occasion. Because, all speeches delivered by the participants are under publication in the form a book to be published by the organizers, the extempore parts are not included.]

Introduction

In the sixth year of the Hejira (emigration of Prophet Muhammad to Medina from the persecution in Mecca), the Prophet granted to the monks of the monastery of St. Catherine, near Mount Sinai, and to all Christians, a charter which is a monument of enlightened tolerance. By it the Prophet of Islam secured to the Christians important privileges and immunities and the Muslims were prohibited, under severe penalties, from violating and abusing what was contained in the document. In the charter the Prophet himself undertook and enjoined on his followers to protect the Christians, to guard them from all injuries and to defend their churches and the residences of their priests. They were not to be unfairly taxed; no Bishop was to be driven out of

his Bishopric; no Christian was to be forced to give up his religion; no pilgrim was to be detained from his pilgrimage; the churches were not to be pulled down for building Mosques; if the Christians should stand in need of assistance for the repair of their churches or in any matter pertaining to their religion, the Muslims were to assist them.

The charter of the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad, may infinite peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is one of the greatest examples in human history where the founder of a faith made explicit guarantees honoring the life, liberty, and property of the followers of another faith. We need to emulate such manifest tolerance of the religious traditions of other faiths and our limits of tolerance should be likewise.

If the events across the world were examined, it would be found that the root cause of intolerance leading to persecution is the type of misunderstanding that emanates from misinterpreting and from being misguided by religious bias. To some people this bias may well be their tradition. It is possible that religious traditions may be followed to extremes, turning intolerance into a tradition in itself. Therefore, it is not uncommon to notice social and political insensitivity towards other religious cultures. Blatant examples of lack of understanding are observable in the media quite frequently. Thus, the need to host meetings of the type for which this paper was written is increasing. And, unless we understand each other's religious traditions and practice more tolerance in our religious behavior the danger of a nuclear holocaust is imminent.

God willing, these meetings, including the efforts of the organizers as well as of the participants of this colloquy, will pave the long and arduous way to unitedly as well as universally respect and honor the freedom of religious beliefs of each other.

As participants of this colloquy it is important to share with every other religious denomination the seriousness of the issues in religious intolerance and religious persecution. These are two inter-linked factors. These are the weapons waged by the fanatic theologians or the religious philosophers that will ultimately drive the world right into the hands of communism. It is the ignorant religious politicians within the free world who have orchestrated popular religious sentiments in ways that remind us of the

medieval inquisitions, the guillotine, burnings at the stake, forcing the people to degrade and feel disgusted with that which led them to the path of their Creator.

Thus, today, it is not an issue between a person from Christianity and a person from the Jewish faith; nor a question between a person from Islam and a person of the Hindu persuasion. Rather, it is a question against religion itself. This trend should be stopped forthwith. We should all stand up against any type or form of religious intolerance or religious persecution and publicly condemn it in every decent way .

As a first step we would like to educate each other in our respective religious traditions and limits of tolerance as preached and practiced by the founder of that faith.

The Islamic Traditions on Limits of Tolerance

The Holy Quran clearly states:

“Procliam: ‘O Ye people, now has the truth come to you from your Lord. So whosoever follows the guidance, follows it for the good of his own soul, and whosoever errs, errs only to its loss. I am not appointed a keeper over you.’ Follow that which is revealed to thee and be steadfast until Allah pronounces His judgment. He is the Best of Judges.” (10:109-110).

Types of Religious Traditions in Islam

There are two types of religious traditions in Islam. First, there are traditions with respect to those who have professed their allegiance to Islam. For them, the teachings of the Holy Quran and traditions of the Holy founder of Islam constituting his practice of Islam apply. Even after having accepted Islam, there is no Quranic penalty in this world for an apostate:

“O ye who believe, whoso from among you turns back from his religion, should know that Allah will soon bring a people whom He will love and who will love Him, a people kindly and humbly inclined towards believers and firm and impervious towards disbelievers. They will strive in the cause of Allah and will not fear the reproach of a fault-finder. That is Allah’s Grace; He bestows it upon whomsoever He pleases. Allah is Bountiful, All-Knowing.” (5:55).

"Those who believe, then disbelieve, then again believe, then disbelieve, and go on increasing in disbelief, Allah will never forgive them nor will He guide them to the way." (4:138).

"Surely, those who disbelieve after they have believed and then go on increasing in disbelief, their repentance shall not be accepted, and they are the ones who have gone astray." (3:73).

Secondly, there are traditions that pertain to those who have not accepted Islam as their faith. Islamic teaching and traditions with respect to both these groups are clear, as amplified below.

"Proclaim: 'it is the truth from your Lord; wherefore, let him who will, believe, and let him who will disbelieve.'" (18:30).

"There shall be no compulsion in faith." (2:27).

The Limits of Tolerance

Certain limits have been prescribed in the book of the All-Wise Allah. They do not relate to religious tolerance as defined in terms of agreement or disagreement with the faiths of other people. In so far as the toleration of the beliefs of others are concerned, Islam clearly enjoins freedom of belief. However, the Almighty Allah has specified His limits. These limits are designed to protect and secure the society against undue hazards. These are in the form of specific commandments, injunction, and directions. Muslims have been advised to keep well away from these limits. As this paper intends to discuss limits from the point of view of limits of tolerance, no further treatment of limits of social conduct is necessary.

Freedom of Conscience in Islam

Islam has established an ideal standard in respect of freedom of conscience. God Almighty has said in effect: This is the religion of nature which comprises perfect guidance. A perfect book has been revealed. No other teaching fulfills human needs to a greater degree nor provides greater beneficence for man, nor discloses to man more clearly the ways that bring man nearer to God. It is Islam alone which has thrown open to man all the gates of approach to God. It imposes no compulsion nor does it permit

any. In Islam God says: I account compulsion as evil. I proclaim freedom of conscience and guarantee freedom of belief.

The Holy Quran clearly states:

“Proclaim, O Prophet: This is the truth from your Lord; then let him who will, believe, and let him who will, disbelieve. We have prepared for the wrongdoers a fire which covers them alike.” (18:30)

The purpose of creation would be frustrated if man were not to be bestowed the freedom that distinguishes him from the angels. According to the Holy Quran and the practice of the Prophet of Islam, Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa, eternal peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, everyone is free to affirm his faith voluntarily, or to proclaim his denial without restraint.

Religious Freedom Guaranteed in the Holy Quran

Religious freedom is guaranteed to all human beings in the followings verses of the Holy Quran:

“And who is more unjust than he who prohibits the name of Allah being glorified in Allah’s temples and strives to ruin them? It was not proper for such men to enter them except in fear. For them is disgrace in this world; and theirs shall be a great punishment in the next.” (2:115).

Condemning the extremists and the fanatics, this verse of the Holy Quran constitutes a strong indictment of those who carry their religious difference to such extremes that they do not even refrain from perpetuating outrages against the places of worship belonging to other creeds. They hinder people from worshipping God in their sacred places and go even so far as to destroy their temples. Such acts of violence are denounced here in strong terms and a lesson of tolerance and broadmindedness is inculcated. The Quran recognizes for all men the free and unrestricted right for worship, for a temple or a Mosque is a place dedicated to the worship of God and the person who prevents others from worshipping God in it, in fact, contributes to its ruin and desolation.

There is no Compulsion in Religion

“There is no compulsion in religion. Surely, the right has becom distinct from error; so whosoever refuses to be led by those who transgress, and believes in Allah, has surely

grasped a strong handle which knows no breaking. And Allah is all-hearing, all-knowing. (2:257).

This verse forbids the use of force for converting non-Muslims to Islam. It also gives the reason for prohibiting the use of compulsion: Truth stands out distinct from error. Islam is manifest truth.

Freedom of Worship Guaranteed to Followers of Other Religions

On the freedom of teaching, practice, worship and observance of religion, the following verses of the Holy Quran are extremely instructive:

“Surely, We sent down the Torah wherein was guidance and light. By it did the prophets, who were obedient to Us, judge for the jews, as did the godly persons and those learned in the law, for they were required to preserve the book of Allah, and because they were guardians over it. Therefore fear not men but fear Me, and barter not My signs for a paltry price. Whoso judges not by that which Allah has sent down, these it is who are the disbelievers. Therein We prescribed for them: A life for a life, an eye for an eye, a nose for a nose, and ear for an ear, a tooth for a tooth, and for other injuries equitable retaliation; and whoso waives the right thereto, it shall be expiation for his sins. Whoso judges not by what Allah has sent down, these it is who are the wrongdoers.”

“We caused Jesus, son of Mary, to follow in their footsteps, fulfilling that which was revealed before him in the Torah, and we gave him the gospel which contained guidance and light, guidance and an admonition for the God-fearing. Let the people of the gospel judge according to what Allah has revealed therein, and whoso judges not by what Allah has revealed, these it is who are the rebellious.” (5:45-48).

Guaranteeing Protection to One Who Seeks it

“And if any one of the idolators seeks protection of thee, grant him protection so that he may hear the word of Allah; then convey him to his place of security. That is because they are a people who have no knowledge.” (9:6).

According to the injunctions of this verse, during wars instigated by idolators, when an idolator desired to investigate the truth about Islam, he was granted protection, safely conducted to the headquarters to complete his investigation and was safely returned back.

Religious Freedom and Tolerance in the Life of the Prophet of Islam

In the life of the Prophet of Islam we observe the freedom of religion manifesting itself through his high moral qualities like forbearance, mercy, retribution, endurance, etc. God almighty divided his life into two phases: one phase of hardship and calamities and sufferings, and the other of victory; so that during the phase of sufferings those high moral qualities might be demonstrated that come into play at such times and during the phase of victory and authority those high moral qualities might be illustrated which cannot be displayed in the absence of authority.

During the period of trials in Mecca, which extended over thirteen years, the Holy Prophet demonstrated in practice all the high moral qualities which a perfectly righteous man should exhibit at such a time, such as trust in God, perfect serenity under sufferings, steady and eager carrying out of duties and fearless courage.

During the second phase, the phase of victory, authority and prosperity, he demonstrated such high qualities as forbearance, forgiveness, benevolence, and courage. He forgave those who had expelled him from Mecca, bestowed great wealth upon those who were in need and having obtained authority over his enemies, he forgave them all.

Persecution as a Sequel to Intolerance

We find it quite common in the world that intolerance leads to persecution. The Holy Quran calls for perseverance and toleration on the part of the Muslims. The commandment of the Almighty Allah is contained in 4:98:

“Verily, from those whom the angels cause to die while they are wronging their own souls they will enquire: What were you after? They will reply: We were treated as weak in the land. The angels will retort: was not Allah’s earth vast enough for you to emigrate therein?”

Persecution is like cancer. The oppressor continues to boil in

rage, and tyranny ferments his brain, turning it into a cauldron of relentless brutality. In such circumstances, it is possible that in addition to leaving his hearth and home in order to uphold his conscience and to render his duty of worship to his maker in complete sincerity, the victim of religious intolerance may eventually die. For him or her the divine support is clear:

“Whoso migrates for the sake of Allah will find in the earth an abundant place of refuge and plentifulness; and whoso goes forth from his home, emigrating in the cause of Allah, and death overtakes him, his reward lies with Allah, and Allah is most forgiving and merciful.” (4:101).

Facing Total Persecution

In the beginning of Islam the Muslims were commanded that if the enemies of Islam sought, as they in fact did, to wipe out Islam by force, they would not take up the sword in opposition to them. But then a time came when it was announced in the Holy Quran:

“Permission to fight is granted to those against whom war is made because they have been wronged and Allah indeed has the power to help them.” (22:40)

This meant that the wrongdoing of the enemies having reached its extreme limit, the Muslims were permitted, for the safeguarding of the freedom of conscience and freedom of belief, to take up the sword against the sword of the enemy. They were to continue to wield it till freedom of conscience and freedom of belief were firmly reestablished in human society according to God's design.

Accordingly, the first and foremost purpose of the wars of Islam was, and will always be, to establish the freedom of belief and worship and to fight in defense of country, honor and freedom against an unprovoked attack.

But, let it be clearly understood that the verses advocating man's beliefs and convictions (for example, 10:109; 18:30; 50:46; 88:22-23) were strictly obeyed by the Prophet of Islam and his companions even if acting upon them meant loss of prestige. This is what happened at the time of the signing of the treaty of Hudaibiya. It happened again when the Jewish tribe of Banu Nadir, on their banishment from Medina as a result of their conspiring and spying against the Muslims in whose city they had enjoyed citizenship, were allowed to take with them the scions of

the Muslim families of Aus and Khazraj (much against the remonstrances of their Muslims relatives), because they (the scions) had chosen to go with the Jews. These instances can be found all across the vast frontiers where the Muslims lived.

An Historic, Unique and Unparalleled Example

A Christian deputaion from Najran (in Arabia) consisting of sixty persons headed by their chief Abd Al-Masih known as Al-Aqib came to the Holy Prophet of Islam, eternal peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, to discuss the question of what they called 'the divinity of Jesus'. The discussion continued at some length. When the question had been fully discussed and the members of the deputaion were found to be still insisting on their false doctrines, the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be on him, in obedience to a divine command invited them as a last resort to join him in a sort of a prayer-contest called Mubahala, i.e., invoking the curse of God on the holders of false beliefs. The Christians declined to accept the offer.

The most important event that happened during this discussion in the Holy Prophet's Mosque was that the deputation asked permission to depart from the Mosque to hold their religious service at some convenient spot. The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be on him, said that there was no need for them to go out of the Mosque which was itself a place consecrated to the worship of God, and that they could hold their service in it. This was an act of tolerance unparalleled in the history of all religions.

The Teaching of Tolerance by the Holy Quran

In the exercise of religious freedom the principles of tolerance of the acts of other are governed by the Quranic injunctions mentioned below. Allah, the Exalted has said:

"Those who suppress their anger and forgive people and Allah loves the benevolent." (3:135)

"Make forebearance thy rule and enjoin equity and turn away from the ignorant." (7:200)

"Good and evil are not alike. Repel evil with that which is best and lo, he between whom and thyself was enmity is as though he were a warm friend. But none attains to this save those who are staedfast and none attains to this save

those who are granted a large share of good.” (41:35-36)

“The wronged one who endures with fortitude and forgives indeed achieves a matter of high resolve” (42:44)

“Let them forgive and forbear. Do you not desire that Allah should forgive you?” (24:23)

“God enjoins equity, beneficence and treatment like that between relatives; and forbids evil which concerns the individual alone and are not manifest, and those that are manifest and offend the feelings of others.” (16:90)

The best exhortation of the Almighty Allah with respect to the tolerance of acts whereby your own religious freedom has been infringed upon are:

“Repel evil with good.” (13:23)

“Call unto the way of the Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation and argue with them in a way that is best. (16:126)

“Cooperate with one another in the promotion of virtue and beneficence; but cooperate not with one another in fostering sin and transgression. Be mindful of your duty to Allah: surely, Allah is severe in retribution.” (5:3)

Toleration Within Members of the Same Faith

Within religion, the matter of freedom relates to questions such as what are the limits or extremes of religious behavior. These questions are equally important and the admonitions of the Holy Quran with regard to them are summarized below:

Allah exhorts the exercise of moderation in human behavior (7:32 and 25:68) and has set limits which must not be exceeded at all (2:230, 2:188). Having accepted these limits Allah says:

“Rejoice then, in your bargain that you have made with Him; and that it is which is the supreme triumph. These are the ones who turn to God in repentance, and who worship Him, who praise Him, who go out in the land serving Him, who bow down to Him, who prostrate themselves in prayer, who enjoin equity and forbid iniquity, and who watch the limits set by Allah. Give thou glad tidings to those who have faith.” (9:111-12)

“Allah is the friend of those who believe; He brings them

out of all kinds of darkness into light. And those who disbelieve, their friends are the transgressors who bring them out of light into darknesses. These are the inmates of the fire, therein shall they abide." (2:258)

There can be no religious peace or tolerance without first establishing true unity of God. Because nations, peoples and societies or communities come from different races, religions, colors or creeds, disharmony will continue to be evidenced. We have to practice a true and universal brotherhood attainable only by accepting true unity of God who created us all. A Muslim has to recite in his prayers forty times a day:

"All praise belongs to God, the Lord of the universe, Lord of the Christians, Lord of the Hindus, Lord of the Jewish people and others." (1:2)

Such a concept, and a practice based upon such a concept, while deterring people from acting against each other also paves the way to the maintainance of mutual accord and tolerance. The religious limits are not just confined to one's own particular creed or faith but apply to all faiths, all colors, all creeds, all nations, all societies, all communities. Indeed it applies to all the universe because the concept of God's unity would have eliminated any ideas of regional or limited godheads, which in Islam is called *shirk* or setting up equals with the Almighty—being the greatest sin.

It is from this point of view that one realizes the great significance of the teaching of the Holy Quran:

"Say, We believe in Allah and in that which has been revealed to us, and in that which was revealed to Abraham, and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes; and that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and (also) that which was given to the Prophets from their Lord; we do not make any distinctions between any of them, and to him do we submit." (2:137)

Conclusion

The important principle of human behavior for religious freedom and the limits of tolerance taught by the Holy Quran and demonstrated in the life of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be on him, is that it is wrong to imagine that revealed guidance must under no circumstances inculcate resistance to the

enemy and should always demonstrate its love and mercy by way of meekness and gentleness. When God observes that His righteous servants are in peril of being destroyed at the hands of worshippers of falsehood and that this would lead to great disorder He manifests His appropriate design, whether from heaven or from earth, for the safeguarding of the righteous and for putting down of disorder; for as He is Merciful, he is also Wise.

In the end I caution all defenders of religious freedom against crossing the limits that might oppress others in their realms. The Prophet of Islam says: Let no one oppress another. Beware of the cry of the oppressed, for there is no bar between it and Allah.

Reproduced below is the exact document alluded to in the introduction:

“This is the document which Muhammad, son of Abdullah, God’s Prophet, warner and bearer of glad tidings, has caused to be written so that there should remain no excuse for those coming after.

“I have caused this document to be written for the Christians of the East and the West, for those who live near, and for those of the distant lands, for the Christians living at present and for those who will come after, for those Christians who are known to us and for those as well whom we do not know.

“Any Muslim violating and abusing what is therein ordered would be regarded as a violator of God’s testament and would be the breaker of his promise and would make himself deserving of God’s curse, be he a king or a subject.

“I promise that any monk, or way-farer, etc., who will seek my help on the mountains, in forests, deserts or habitations, or in places of worship, I will repel his enemies with all my friends and helpers, with all my relatives and with all those who profess to follow me and will defend him, because they are my covenant.

“And I will defend the covenanted against the persecution, injury and embarrassment by their enemies in lieu of the poll-tax they have promised to pay. If they prefer themselves to defend their properties and their persons,

they will be allowed to do so and will not be put to any inconvenience on that account.

“No Bishop will be expelled from his Bishopric, no monk from his monastery, no priest from his place of worship, and no pilgrim will be detained from his pilgrimage.

“None of their churches or other places of worship will be desolated or destroyed or demolished. No material of their churches will be used for building Mosques or houses for the Muslims. Any Muslims doing so will be regarded as recalcitrant to God and his Prophet.

“Monks and Bishops will be subject to no tax or indemnity whether they be in forests or on the rivers, or in the East or West, North or South.

I give them my word of honor. They are on my promise and covenant and will enjoy perfect immunity from all sorts or inconveniences.

“Every help shall be given them in the repair of their churches. They shall be protected by the Muslims.

“Let this document not be disobeyed till the judgment day.”



“Permission to fight is given to those against whom war is made, because they have been wronged—and Allah indeed has power to help them. Those who have been driven out from their homes unjustly only because they said, ‘Our Lord is Allah’—and if Allah did not repel some men by means of others, there would surely have been pulled down cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques, wherein the name of Allah is oft commemorated. And Allah will surely help one who helps Him. Allah is indeed powerful, Mighty. Those who, if We establish them in the earth, will observe Prayer and pay the Zakat and enjoin good and forbid evil. And with Allah rests the final issue of all affairs.” (The Holy Quran; 22:40-42)



ON THE SURVIVAL OF JESUS FROM DEATH BY CRUCIFIXION

(Hussain M. Sajid, MD)

[An article on the crucifixion of Jesus Christ appeared in the March 21, 1986, issue of JAMA (the Journal of the American Medical Association). The article, authored by William D. Edwards, MD; Wesley J. Gabel, MD; and Floyd E. Hosmer, MS, AMI, is entitled: On The Physical Death Of Jesus Christ.

The authors state that "Jesus of Nazareth underwent Jewish and Roman trials, was flogged, and was sentenced to death by crucifixion. The major pathophysiologic effect of crucifixion was an interference with normal respirations. Accordingly, death resulted primarily from hypovolemic shock and exhaustion asphyxia. Jesus' death was ensured by the thrust of a soldier's spear into his side. Modern medical interpretation of the historical evidence indicates that Jesus was dead when taken down from the cross."

An analysis of the JAMA article appears below.]

Dr. William D. Edwards' article in the *Journal of American Medical Association* — (JAMA) has stirred a host of comments. The critics are mainly concerned about the anti-semitic sentiments this article seems to generate by blaming the Jews for the death of Jesus. Blaine C. White MD, protested that "This (article) results in some degree of historical distortion and distant (admittedly not malevolent) echoes of Anti-Semitism"². Joel S. Glaser MD, was apparently distressed by the article and stated: "Distressingly, the authors have reconstructed the ancient, but insubstantial, charge of deicide leveled against the Jews,.....(the article implies) by circuitous medical suppositions used as tangential support, that a people are accountable (again) for a real or imagined event that did or did not transpire 2,000 years ago."³ Deniel Musher, MD, writes: "Finally, can the editor truly be unaware of the implications of printing an article that emphasizes the role of the Jews in the death of Jesus during the Easter week? Have you never heard that "Christ killer" was the cry of vicious anti-Semites who, at this time of year and throughout Europe, during the past millennium and more, used New Testament teachings as the basis for pogroms in which countless innocent Jews were slaughtered?"⁴ William B. Freedman MD has echoed similar protest against the anti-Semitic feelings that

the article provokes⁵. No commentator ventured to investigate the claim itself, i.e., whether or not Jesus died on the cross. Dr. Edwards, et al, did not care to analyze the pre and post crucifixion events which may be taken as a willful neglect on the part of the authors as all the evidence contained therein contradicts their polemic theory that Jesus physically died on the cross.

The critics have quoted ample references to support the fact that the Gospels are neither an authentic, infallible, accurate, nor factual narration of the events of crucifixion. Gerschon Shuster MD has quoted many references to support his view that "the reliance on the scriptures as a source of scientific inquiry pertaining to the actual history of Jesus has been refuted by Biblical scholars."⁶ These Gospels and especially the narrative of Passion and Crucifixion were written with the sole motive of propagation of the newly emerging faith, and the authors of these gospels did not hesitate to color these events with their brand of imagination to impress the gentiles.

Matthew J. Ellenhorn, et al, also question the accuracy of the medical and historical account as presented by the authors: "The authors admit that the whole subject is shrouded in controversy, yet they have dignified their rationale for writing this document as an "interdisciplinary" investigationIndeed, by any measure, this is a purely theological article whose sources, far from being subject to an objective scientific editorial analysis, are the product of faith alone, and not of verifiable fact, certainly not within the domain of referees of a medical journal."⁷

Rustin Berlow has analysed the references upon which the authors have laid their foundations of historical data and in a scholarly fashion has demonstrated the data to be historically controversial, inaccurate and fallible. Rustin Berlow writes: "The authors admit that a major problem with attempting any analysis is that 'the credibility of any discussion of Jesus' death will be determined primarily by the credibility of one's sources'. The authors were obviously not present, and no autopsy was performed; thus, they rely on information from Biblical and extrabiblical texts. Ten references are made to Josh McDowell's work, especially: 'Evidence That Demands a Verdict: Historical Evidences for the Christian Faith.' This work is used to establish the 'reliability and accuracy of the ancient manuscripts.' McDowell is a 'traveling representative for Campus Crusades for Christ' who writes to 'help my brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ to write term papers, give speeches, and

inject into Scriptures the relevancy of Christianity in the 20th century.' He does not consider himself a secular Biblical scholar, such scholars generally ascribe to the extrabiblical citation less authority than does McDowell ... The major (problem) is that the text, written as it was to inspire and convert, cannot be taken at face value to reflect historical events accurately."⁸

The authors of the Gospels were not fundamentally interested in recording reliable historical data. Rather, they were interested in presenting Jesus as seen through the eyes of the faith. Matthew J. Ellenhorn, et al, have labeled this article to be purely theological whose facts cannot be verified and regards the drawings to be "Highly imaginative and emotionally inflammatory."⁷

Leaving aside the trial, the carrying of the cross, the flogging and the crucifixion itself, I will concentrate only upon the circumstantial evidence of the alleged death of Jesus on the cross as advanced by the authors, and present the conclusion as held by the Ahmadiyya Community that Jesus did not die on the cross.

From among the four gospels, only John (19:34) mentions the lance-wound at the right side of the chest of Jesus and there are different versions of this phrase in different Bible translations. The word "suddenly" and in another version "immediatly" is worth strict scrutiny. It is a well recognised medical fact that when the skin is pierced with a sharp instrument the venous blood oozes out slowly while the arterial blood gushes forth. The immediate or sudden appearance of the blood from the edges of the lance-wound is a strong evidence in favor of the heart still pumping blood when the wound was inflicted. On further analysis we discover that Jesus was in an upright position, at least six feet from the ground when the lance-wound was inflicted. It would require an extraordinarily tall man to thrust a sharp spear so as to penetrate the serratus anterior and intercostal muscles as proposed by Dr. Pierre Barbet. This was not the case. The lance caused a flesh wound only and reached neither the right heart nor the pericardium. Ronald M. Meyer, MD considers the extent of the spear thrust as guesswork "A person not reading the text and references with care may think that a painstakingly rendered diagram of a spear entering the right ventricle after passing through the right upper lobe of the lung represents more than guesswork about what actually happened to Jesus."⁹

Dr. Edwards has quoted his experience of having performed one thousand autopsies,¹⁰ as has also been claimed by the author of "A Doctor at Calvary," Dr. P. Barbet.

It is customary that during the performance of an autopsy the corpse is laid on the table in a horizontal position which makes the blood gravitate to the dependent parts of the body. I would like to enquire as to how many autopsies Dr. Edwards performed with the corpse hung on a stake and thus observed the flow of the blood from the scalpel wound? In an upright position most of the blood will gravitate to the legs, pelvic and abdominal viscera and only a living person will maintain enough blood in the upper torso by means of dynamic circulation so as to bleed “immediately” from a wound inflicted at the side of the chest above the level of the liver and the diaphragm. There is no parallel between the position of the body of Jesus on the cross and the inference of Dr. Edwards.

The authors have tried to conclude that Jesus died on the cross due to asphyxiation. This manner of death on the cross could be thwarted for days by pulling one’s body on his feet till the legs became too weak due to starvation and exposure to the elements to push and sustain the weight of the body. In order to hasten death and to counteract the manouver of raising of the body on its feet, it was the custom to break the legs. John 19:35 clearly states the legs of Jesus were not broken. According to Barbet, Jesus’ agony was short¹² and he spoke for three hours.¹³ The death by asphyxiation could not have and did not occur in such a short period.

It is more feasible that Jesus fainted on the cross due to hypoglycemia and thirst (one of his last words were “I am thirsty”)¹⁴ and he was taken as dead by his friends who were anxious to remove Jesus from the cross as early as possible. He was taken down from the cross in a semi-conscious state, his heart still beating and causing the blood to extravasate around the edges of the wounds. STURP scientists also believe that the stains around wound images on the shroud (the Shroud of Turin—believed by many to be the actual burial cloth of Jesus.) are serum, the thin liquid that separates out from blood during coagulation. The coagulation of the blood is a specific property of the living blood and ceases to be after death.

Father Wilde while discussing about the blood stains on the Shroud of Turin admits his inability to explain the direction of the flow of blood from multiple bleeding points on the body of Jesus and poses a question: “However, while Jesus’ dead body lay prone in the tomb, was it possible, for example, for blood to flow *upwards* out of wounds in the forehead and then UP to higher areas on the face so as to form the bloodstains in this area that appear on the

Shroud? This is the problem that requires further scientific attention...."¹⁵

He inadvertently admits that the blood stains on the shroud in the area of the face are the stains of blood flowing upward after the body of Jesus was laid prone in the tomb but fails to admit that the wounds of an alleged dead body do not bleed, let alone, the blood flowing *upwards* against the law of gravity. The evidence that the blood from the wounds were flowing *after* the body of Jesus was laid in the tomb demands the verdict that his heart was still beating and pumping blood. Father Wilde acknowledges that these stains on the shroud occurred *after* the body of Jesus was taken down from the cross and laid prone in the tomb wrapped in the Shroud.¹⁶

The question posed by Father Wilde was answered ninety years ago by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian when he convincingly proved in his book "Jesus In India" that Jesus *did not die on the cross* and that his body was still living and his heart was still beating when Jesus was taken down from the cross in a semistuporous condition. This one statement explains all the questions that have been puzzling the faithful Christian Scholars for centuries and it further lends an answer to another riddle viz; of Rigor Mortis. The Christian physicians and scholars have taken great pains in trying to establish that when Jesus' body was taken down from the cross, rigor mortis had already set in, in a very brief period of time.

Father Wilde criticizes the advocates of rigor mortis and himself poses another question: "The hands of Jesus on the Shroud are not bound or fastened with cloth or with a cord so as to hold them in place. Apparently rigor mortis is taken to be the sole agent retaining the body in what Dr. Jackson tells us was a quite unnatural and unrelaxed position. A very convenient type of rigor mortis, I would note —not yet so advanced as to prevent those who were burying Jesus from arranging his hands and arms freely in this fashion but just enough, supposedly, to permit Jesus' body to retain this awkward and strained posture, once placed in it. Since Jesus' burial attendants knew as well as we do,.... it is puzzling that they nonetheless made no effort to bind Jesus' wrists so that they might remain in the desired position."¹⁷

If we look at all the available scientific and historical data about the crucifixion of Jesus we arrive at only one conclusion that Jesus survived crucifixion and died a natural death many years later, as proclaimed by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian. The latest scientific

study of the blood stains on the shroud in the article, "New Evidence May Explain Image on Shroud of Turin" by Joseph A. Kohlbeck and Eugenia L. Nitowske, in Biblical Archeology Review, July/August, 1986, contradicts the hypothesis that Jesus died on the cross. If Dr. Edwards, et al, had cared to see beyond their faithful assumptions, it would have been clear that all the riddles presented by the scientific data obtained from the analysis of the shroud have but one explanation, that Jesus did not die on the cross, a belief which is in complete agreement rather than at odds with modern medical knowledge.

Faith does not mean dismantling the apparatus of reason. He who wishes to believe today must be taught to follow the path of reason.

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A.I.D.S. AGAINST RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

(Dr. Syed Farooq Ahmad, F.R.C.S.)

When there is a perversion of the way things were meant to be, when men interfere with the natural course of things, then the result is inevitably detrimental for mankind. In both the Quran and the Bible, people have been exhorted towards chastity and purity and have been warned against the evils of promiscuity and perversion. We read in the Quran, about the prophet Lot who was sent to his people:

"And call to mind Lot when he said to his people, You commit an abomination such as no one among mankind has ever committed before you; What! do you approach men with lust and leave your wives whom your Lord has created for you? Nay you are a people who transgress all limits." But the only answer of his people was that they said, *"Bring upon us the punishment of Allah if thou speakest the truth."* He said, *"Help me my Lord, against the wicked people."* (29:29-30; 26:166-168)

"And go not nigh unto adultery, surely it is a manifest indecency and an evil way." (17:33)

"Nor do the servants of the Gracious Allah commit adultery-and he who does that shall meet the punishment of his sin; doubled for him shall be the punishment on the Judgement Day, and he will abide therein, disgraced." (25:69,70)

Jesus said:

"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery', But I say unto you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away for it is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell....."(Matt.5:27-30)

"For all the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries. The kings of the earth committed adultery

with her and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries." Then I heard another voice from heaven say: "Come out of her, my people, so that will not share in her sins, nor receive any of her plagues; for her sins are piled up to heaven and God has remembered her crimes." (Rev. 18:3)

The practice of extra-marital sex and homosexuality have been known to mankind since the beginning of civilization. Such sins have been committed in every country by followers of all religions at all times. The incidence of both homosexuality and indulgence in extra-marital sex have been on a tremendous increase during the last four decades. They have caused many social problems; mainly divorce and increasing illegitimate births and have been responsible for a steep curve in the number of venereal diseases, e.g. Syphilis, Gonorrhoea, Cancer of the Cervix and A.I.D.S. The incidence of Syphilis has no doubt been on the decline in many countries, thanks to advances in various fields of medical science. According to a recent survey by the DHSS, 2000 women die annually of Cervical Cancer in the U.K. The main cause of the increase of these diseases is the gradual decline in the orthodox practice of different religious faiths. The society where we live has become far too permissive. Apart from other religious teachings, the Quran and Bible both affirm positively that one should abstain from such vices. I will confine the rest of my writings to A.I.D.S. only.

The General Background of A.I.D.S.

The word AIDS stands for 'Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome' ('acquired' meaning caught as opposed to inherited; 'immuno-deficiency' implying poor body defense mechanisms against infections; and 'syndrome' meaning a group of illnesses which help to identify a particular disease). It is caused by a virus: (Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus, H.I.V.). The first recognized case of A.I.D.S. occurred in the summer of 1981 in the U.S.A. The Human A.I.D.S. virus is thought to have come from a species of monkey in Africa and man was probably infected through its bite. A.I.D.S. itself, and its causative virus was first described by Montagnier in 1981. The following year, Gallow, a leading American expert confirmed the work of Montagnier and named the virus H.I.V. In 1983, Dr. Carswell, born in Britain, who had

worked many years in Uganda, first noticed the disease in a few patients. These patients lost weight, developed sores and skin infections. Examinations of their blood revealed H.I.V.

Dr. Dagleish of the London Institute of Cancer, and Dr. Clumeck, a distinguished French Scientist, were the first to believe that the disease was sexually transmitted.

The Menace of A.I.D.S

A.I.D.S. is almost always fatal. According to Dr. Robert Gallow, a co-discoverer of the H.I.V. virus, "A.I.D.S. is an emergency and is the most lethal pandemic of the 20th century. It is much more dangerous than Cholera, the Plague, Polio, Syphilis or Influenza which have killed millions of people in the past. The famous Plague epidemic of London (1664), the Cholera epidemic of Hungary (1830), the Black Death (1349) and the Spanish Influenza of 1918 are not as dangerous as this disease of our century." The great American veteran actor, Rock Hudson, was a victim of A.I.D.S. He struggled for his life and his subsequent death in 1985 stunned the whole of the U.S.A.

The Incidence of A.I.D.S.

A.I.D.S. is one of the world's worst epidemics in human history. According to a recent press release from the World Health Organization (W.H.O.) in Geneva, 50 to 100 million people will have died of A.I.D.S. by 1991. Why A.I.D.S. was unknown before 1981 is a medical mystery. Volumes of literature have been published about this menace throughout the world.

In 1981 the number of A.I.D.S. victims in the U.S.A. was 337. In December 1983 the figure was 4100; in December 1984 it had risen to 7025; by October 1985 it had reached 14409. It is now believed that there are a staggering 200,000 A.I.D.S. carriers in the whole of the U.S.A. and 16000 have died so far. This last figure accounts for 65% of the adults and 55% of the children who had A.I.D.S.

The number of A.I.D.S. carriers in Britain is 10.8 million people, and according to Tony France, a senior Registrar in the A.I.D.S. ward at Edinburgh City Hospital, Edinburgh is now the fastest growing centre of A.I.D.S. infection in the U.K.

The W.H.O. claim that in Europe, 3735 cases have been reported. The following table shows the incidence of A.I.D.S. in the U.K., U.S.A., and other countries.

A.I.D.S. In the U.S.A.

AIDS in the U.S.	Cases	Deaths
Pre 1981	76	63
1981	261	234
1982	999	853
1983	2764	2304
1984	5531	4251
1985	9475	5636
1986 to 29th Dec.	<u>9897</u>	<u>2960</u>
Totals	29003	16301

Source: Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta. Total Population of the USA is 237.5 million.

A.I.D.S. IN Britain

A.I.D.S.in Britain:-	Cases	Deaths
1982	3	3
1983	26	26
1984	77	60
1985	165	87
1986	<u>339</u>	<u>117</u>
Totals	610	293

Source: Department of Health. Figures are confirmed cases in the U.K. where the total population is 56.4 million.

A.I.D.S. In 27 European Countries

Country	Cases by Sept. 30, 1986	Rates per Million.
Austria	44	5.9
Belguim	180	18.2
Czechoslovakia	5	0.3
Denmark	107	21.0
Finland	14	2.9
France	1050	19.1
Germany, Federal Republic of	675	11.1
Greece	25	2.5
Iceland	4	20.0
Ireland	12	3.3
Israel	31	7.4
Italy	367	6.4
Luxemburg	5	12.5
Malta	5	12.5
Netherlands	180	12.4
Norway	26	6.2
Poland	1	0.0
Portugal	40	3.9
Romania	2	0.1
Spain	201	5.2
Sweden	76	9.2
Switzerland	170	26.2
United Kingdom	512	9.1
Yugoslavia	3	-
Total	3735	

German Democratic Republic, Hungary, and the USSR have reported no cases—data is not available.

According to a recent press release by the W.H.O., April 1987, about 14 million people are A.I.D.S. positive.

A.I.D.S in Central Africa

A.I.D.S. appears to be very common in Zaire, Zambia, Uganda and Rawanda. The highest incidence of A.I.D.S. in the world is in Zaire. It is believed that the A.I.D.S. virus probably originated there. The main carriers in African countries are prostitutes. The A.I.D.S. virus H.I.V. is present in 10% of the whole Central African population, and 90% of this proportion is in prostitutes. One million Africans are expected to die from A.I.D.S. in the next 10 years.

A.I.D.S. in the U.S.S.R.

Dr. Trotsky claims, according to the Tass Soviet News agency, that this disease is a problem only for Western countries. It is difficult to obtain the official figure of A.I.D.S. due to a strict censorship of western observation. The Soviets claim that so far they only have one A.I.D.S. patient. They have also announced that they have expelled 32 foreigners who were found to have A.I.D.S. However, it appears that a major screening programme for A.I.D.S. is underway in the USSR.

Modes of Transmission

A.I.D.S. is transmitted by the following routes:

1. Sexual contact (homo-sexual and Hetero-sexual): Outside Africa, 95% of A.I.D.S. victims are Homo-sexuals and Bi-sexuals. In America, about 1 in 1000 Homo-sexuals have become A.I.D.S. victims. In the U.K. about 10 in every million Homo-sexuals are A.I.D.S. victims.
2. Blood Transfusion: Haemophiliacs are the main victims of the A.I.D.S. virus via this route because of their need to have transfusions of special blood factors. By December 1986, 240 Haemophiliacs in the USA had become victims of A.I.D.S. thereby, and in the U.K. 25 in every 4500 Haemophiliacs had become A.I.D.S. victims.
3. Shared needles and syringes(Especially Drug Users): In the U.K. 60 to 100 thousand people are drug abusers and the incidence of A.I.D.S. is increasing in this section of the community.
4. The trans-placental Route: Children may be born with A.I.D.S. from A.I.D.S. infected mothers. The A.I.D.S. virus

probably passes from mother to baby via the placenta or the milk. By the end of 1986, 394 children in the USA were born with A.I.D.S. Some cases have been reported in Australia also.

It is well recognized that the predominant mode of transmission in the Western countries is by Homo-sexuality and, to a lesser degree, prostitution; in African countries, however, it is mainly by prostitutes.

Theories About the Origin of A.I.D.S.

Many theories were suggested about A.I.D.S. Some believed that this disease was a Frankenstein-like monster produced accidentally in a lab and exposed to the world. Some were saying it was a plot to kill all homo-sexuals. The Russians claimed that the C.I.A. had developed the A.I.D.S. virus. Others believe that A.I.D.S. is an African swine fever, the virus of which is present in the blood, semen, and urine. Homo-sexuality is common among the pig animals. The outbreak of African Swine Fever in 1971 was believed to have been responsible for A.I.D.S.

The most likely explanation for A.I.D.S. however, as already described, is that it is caused by the H.I.V. Virus which has its origins in Central Africa.

Symptoms of AIDS

The main symptoms and findings published in the medical literature in different parts of the world are as follows:

1. Unexplained profound fatigue lasting for 7 weeks or over.
2. Swollen glands in neck, armpits and groin.
3. Unexplained weight loss.
4. Persistent night sweating and fever.
5. Persistent shortness of breath and coughing.
6. Appearance of certain skin cancers and mouth cancers.
7. Shingles.
8. Thrush and diarrhoea.
9. Neurological symptoms include lethargy, depression, changes in personality/behavior, disorientation of time/place and impairment of vision and speech.

On the other side of the scale however, A.I.D.S. victims may

remain carriers without manifesting any of the above symptoms. It is therefore a great dilemma, and a problem which involves surgeons, physicians, eye specialists, virologists, epidemiologists and radio-therapists. A.I.D.S. victims usually die of Pneumonia, brain infection, advanced skin, mouth, muscle, and bone cancers.

Conclusion

A.I.D.S. is a frightening disease and is almost always fatal. It will almost certainly kill more people in Africa than starvation and malnutrition.

The epidemic of A.I.D.S. is a catastrophe for humanity and whatever the outcome of world wide research, it seems certain to endure for many years to come. It is a growing menace which will be with us well into the 21st century.

The only way to get out of this plague is to change sexual morality and adhere to the teachings of Holy Quran, the Bible and other religious books.

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“God Almighty has not only set forth excellent teaching for acquiring the quality of chastity but has furnished man with five remedies against un-chastity. These are to restrain one’s eyes from gazing on those who are outside the prohibited degrees; to restrain one’s ears from listening to their voices and to descriptions of their good looks; to avoid occasions which might furnish incitement towards this vice; and to control oneself during the period of celibacy through fasting, dieting, etc.” (*Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam* by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad)

FROM CHURCH TO MOSQUE

(Ali Mwai Macharia)

I was a Roman Catholic before embracing Islam. Like many other spiritually dissatisfied Christians, my mind revolted against the untenable dogmas such as the Trinity, Communion, Consecration, etc., the sum total of which make up the Pro-Pagan faith known as Catholicism. And when I made a far reaching enquiry about the truth of these dogmas, it brought no rational explanation from the ranks of Priests. I finally decided to quit this horrible spiritual desert in search of God.

Strengthened by this firm decision, I took it upon myself to challenge the Divinity of Jesus basing all my arguments on the Bible. Owing to the political climate of that time, the very sign of anti-Christianity was immediately misinterpreted as being politically motivated and was a big enough crime to send someone to jail without trial. Consequently I was soon to test the bitter fruits of my refusal to worship three gods, for not only did I lose my teaching job but I was thrown in jail as well. All these misfortunes brought new hope into my heart and made my stand stronger than ever before. Little did I know that the hidden hand of God which lead all seekers of truth had been stretched forth in my favor.

While I was still in prison, I wrote a letter to Maulana Sheikh Mubarak Ahmad who was then the Chief Missionary of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission in Nairobi, wanting to know more about Islam. This zealous servant of God took no time in sending me a copy of the Swahili translated Holy Qur'an. My joy knew no bounds when I received this precious gem which was destined to reinstate my hitherto impaired spiritual instinct. I read it through, fifteen times while my heart experienced moments of great joy and spiritual ascendancy as I turned each page slowly and reverently. Each chapter and indeed, every verse abounds with undiluted truth and wisdom so that by reading the Holy Qur'an one discovers a new world. For not only did its clear and simple teachings dispel the doubt out of my mind, but its life-giving light illumined my soul and made me a new person altogether. The

Holy Qur'an is a wonderful book indeed. Its teachings although may not claim originality, are complete and final. Every aspect of our life here and hereafter has been summarily dealt with in the Holy Qur'an with profound eloquence. No predetermined puzzles, no prehistoric enigmas and above all, no human interpolations are to be found in this inexhaustible treasure of spiritual wisdom.

I left the prison a completely reformed person and soon reached the climax of my precious discovery by joining the fold of Islam. The religion of Islam, has been rejuvenated to its original purity by Hazrat Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi of this age, peace be on him. His heavenly established movement, Ahmadiyah or the True Islam, of which I am a humble member, is a worldwide organization under a supreme Leader — Khalifa. Its first and foremost task is to propagate the religion of God wherever man lives with a view to ultimately bringing the whole world under one Religion, one Book, one Prophet and one God. In short I joined Islam because of the supremacy of its rational teaching over Christianity and the simplicity of its acceptable rights and tenets. The Islamic creed is very simple and straightforward. To become a Muslim all that is required is to recite these words with determination and understanding: *Ashhadu Alla Ilaha Illallahu Wa ashhadu anna Muhammadur Rasulullah* (I bear witness that none is to be worshipped but Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is His messenger). How clear and rational is the Islamic creed (kalima). Just compare this to the Christian enigma of the Three Gods in One and the One in Three and you will realize as I did, that Christianity in general and Catholicism in particular, is nothing short of the prototype paganism of Greece. Those who read the Holy Qur'an with an unbiased mind coupled with the desire to dig out truth, and then ponder over its brilliant teachings, their souls will be compelled to accept it unreservedly.

(Edited from *East African Times*, as reproduced by
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THE WORLDWIDE AHMADIYYA MUSLIM JAMA'AT

(A Brief Introduction)

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, the most dynamic missionary sect of Islam, numbers about ten million members spread through 114 countries. Ahmadies are found in strength in Pakistan, India, Indonesia, and a number of East and West African countries. They are also well established in many Asian and European countries and in the United States of America. Ahmadiyyat has even reached the Soviet Union and the East European countries such as Poland and Yugoslavia. In Poland, the community has a regular mission with a Polish Ahmadi missionary. The worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is on the march and continues to explore new horizons and new opportunities to spread the message of Islam throughout the world.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community began in 1889 in Qadian, a small village in India's Punjab Province. The founder, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, claimed to be the Promised Reformer whose advent had been predicted by many religions—as Krishna to the Hindus, Jesus to the Christians, Buddha to the Buddhists, and Mahdi to the Muslims. Under Divine guidance, Hazrat Ahmad made the revolutionary disclosure that there was to be only one Reformer; all religions were, in fact, awaiting the same person. Furthermore, he believed Islam to be the complete code of life for all mankind and Hazrat Muhammad, peace and blessings of God be on him, to be the final law bearing prophet. Therefore, Hazrat Ahmad proclaimed that the Promised Reformer could not appear in any independent capacity, rather, he must be subordinate to the Holy Prophet of Islam. The advent of the Promised Reformer, Hazrat Ahmad declared, would finally usher in the golden age of one universal religion, promised by all the prophets and dreamt of by men through the ages.

To fulfill this revelation and establish universal religion, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was born—a very lofty goal indeed for a movement which sprang from such a humble, inconspicuous beginning.

Soon the Community was to be recognized with awe and wonder all over the world as a potent religious force championing the cause of Islam. Even the Soviet research scholar, K.A. Antonova, in her thesis *Religiyai Obschchestvennaya Musl. Norodov Vostoka* noted (pp.103-105) that the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community enjoys the distinction of having established its branches in most countries of the world.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community would forge ahead by conquering the minds and hearts of people through a well-organized and peaceful missionary effort. No sword was to be drawn, no fire-power employed, it was to be entirely a spiritual struggle won with the weapons of prayer and reason based upon religious truth. The transformation of the existing world order was to be wrought through persuasion, logic, patience, and perseverance. No blood was to be shed in the name of religion! Yet, Ahmadies would make every sacrifice even in the face of hostile and bitter opposition. This is the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in a nut-shell.

Service to Mankind

Despite its limited resources, the Community has demonstrated its full commitment to the betterment of mankind through physical as well as spiritual means. Major efforts have been made in the fields of education and establishment of medical facilities throughout Pakistan, India, Indonesia, Ghana, Nigera, Sierra Leon, Gambia, Ivory Cost, Liberia, and Uganda. The spirit of selfless service and excellence of work is deeply appreciated everywhere the Community has spread.

Mosques

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has built more than a thousand mosques in different parts of the world, with over five hundred built in the past three years alone. Today, in Copenhagen, Gotenborg, Zurich, Frankfurt, The Hague, London, and many cities in the U.S., Ahmadies have the distinction of having built the first mosques in those cities. A new mosque was built in Spain in 1982—the first in that country in over 500 years, since the Moors were defeated and the Inquisition begun. In 1983, a mosque began construction in Sydney, Australia. The number of Ahmadi mosques continues to increase

with new mosques being added in different parts of the world every year.

The Holy Qur'an and Islamic Literature

One of the greatest services to Islam that the Community has the honor to render is the translations and publications of the Holy Qur'an into various languages. The quality and standard of Ahmadi translations of the Holy Qur'an has been acknowledged by leading scholars of the world. To date, translations of the Holy Qur'an have been published in English, French, German, Dutch, Danish, Luganda, Swahili, Yoruba, Gurmukhi, Indonesian, and Esperanto. Russian and Italian language editions are in press. Work is continuing on many others with a goal of having translations in a hundred languages by the Ahmadiyya Centennial Jubilee in 1989.

The Ahmadiyya Muslims Community has produced informative, attractive, and authoritative literature on topics covering a wide field of human interests in almost every major language of the world. After the Holy Qur'an and Hadith (Traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of God be on him), the main stream of Ahmadi literature comprises more than 80 books and pamphlets by the founder and an endless profusion of works by various Ahmadi scholars, most eminent of whom being the late Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, translator of many of the books by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (peace be on him) into English and author of such books as Islamic Worship, Muhammad the Seal of the Prophets, and Islam and Human Rights.

World Class Leaders

Ahmadiyyat has produced a number of monumental figures in various subjects, spiritual and mundane. Their spiritual leaders have included Hazrat Maulwi Nooruddin (Khalifatul Masih I), Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad (Khalifatul Masih II), Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad (Khalifatul Masih III), and the present Khalifa, Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad (Khalifatul Masih IV). In the field of Islamic exegesis and commentary on the Holy Qur'an and Hadith, the names of Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad, Malik Ghulam Farid, Maulana Sher Ali, Mir Muhammad Ismail, and Dr. Mufti Muhammad Sadiq are important. In the field

THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

The Ahmadiyya Movement was founded in 1889 by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the expected world Reformer and the Promised Messiah. The Movement is an embodiment of true and real Islam. It seeks to unite mankind with its Creator and to establish peace throughout the world. The present Head of the Movement is Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad. The Ahmadiyya Movement has its Headquarters at Rabwah, Pakistan, and is actively engaged in missionary work at the following centers:

AHMADIYYA MUSLIM MISSIONS

AFRICA

BENIN: P.O. Box 69, Portonova.
GAMBIA: P.O. Box 383 Banjul, Tel. 27608
GHANA: P.O. Box 2327, Accra (OSU New Estates) Tel: 76845
IVORY COAST: Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, 03 BP 416, Adjame-Abidjan 03.
KENYA: P.O. Box 40554, Nairobi (Fort Hall Road) Tel: 264226. Telex: c/o 22278.
LIBERIA: P.O. Box 618, Monrovia (9 Lynch Street)
MAURITIUS: P.O. Box 6 (Rose Hill)
NIGERIA: P.O. Box 418 Lagos (45 Idumagbo Avenue) Tel: 633 757
SIERRA LEONE: P.O. Box 353, Freetown, Tel: 40699/22617
SOUTH AFRICA: Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, P.O. Box 212, Gatesville 7764, Cape Town (Darut-Tabligh-il Islami)
TANZANIA: P.O. Box 376, Dares Salaam (Libya Street) Tel: 21744
UGANDA: P.O. Box 98, Kampala
ZAMBIA: P.O. Box 32345, Lusaka
ZAIRE: P.O. Box 13-856, Kinshasa 1

AMERICAS

CANADA: Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, 10610 Jane St., Maple, Ontario L0J 1E0 416-832-2669 FAX
GUYANA: Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, 198 Oronoque and Almond Streets, P.O. Box 736, Georgetown. Tel: 02-67634
SURINAM: Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, Ephraimszegenweg, 26 P.O. Box 2106, Paramaribo
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO: Ibrahim Bin Yaqub, 126 Eastern Main Road, Tuna Puna 809-665-2708
U.S.A.: 2141 Leroy Place NW, Washington, D.C. 20008 Tel: (202) 232-3737 Cable: ISLAM, Fax: 232-8181

AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIA: Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, P. O. Box 89 (20 Hollinsworth Road) Riverstone 2765 NSW Sydney

ASIA

BANGLADESH: 4 Baxi Bazar Road, Dacca-1.
BURMA: 191-28th Street, Rangoon
FIJI: P.O. Box 3758, Samabula (82 Kings Road), Suva. Tel: 38221
INDIA: Darul Maslih, Qadian, Tel:36
INDONESIA: Jalan Balikpapan 1, No. 10, Djakarta Pusat 1/13. Tel: 36 5342
JAPAN: Ahmadiyya Center, 643-1 Yamanoda, Issha, Idaka-cho, Meito-Ku, Nagoya 465, Tel. 703-1868
PAKISTAN: (Headquarters) Rabwah, Distt. Jhang.
PHILIPPINES: Haji M. Ebbah, Simunal, Bongao, Sulu
SINGAPORE: 111 Onan Rd., Singapore 15
SRI LANKA: Colombo M.E.M. Hasan, 24 San Sebastin Street, Ratnum Road, Colombo 12

EUROPE

BELGIUM: Maulvi S. M. Khan, Brus. Str 3, 1744 Stulriks-Kapelle 02-466-6856
DENMARK: Eriksminde Alle 2, Hvidovre-Copenhagen. Tel: 753502
GERMANY: Die Moschee, Babenhauser, Landstrasse, 25, Frankfurt. Tel: 681485
HOLLAND: De Moschee, Oostduinlaan, 79, Den Haag. Tel: (010-3170) 245902 Telex: 33574 Inter NLA 30C FAX 70-242-881
NORWAY: Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, Frognerveine 53, Oslo-2. Tel. 447188
SPAIN: Mission Ahmadiyya del Islam, Mezquita Basharat, Pedro Abad, near Cordoba, Tel. 160750 Ext. 142
SWEDEN: Nasir Moske Islams Ahmadiyya Forsamling, Toivskillingsgatan 1, S-41482 Goteborg, Sverige. Tel: 414044
SWITZERLAND: Nahmud Moschee, 323, Forschstrasse 8008, Zurich. Tel.: 535570. Telex: 58378 MPTCH Islam 374/XA
UNITED KINGDOM: 16 Gressenhall Road, London SW18 5QL. Tel: 01-870 8517. Telex: 28604 Ref. 1292 FAX 870-1095

WHAT IS ISLAM?

Islam means *peace, surrender*. The significance of the name Islam is the attainment of a life of perfect peace and eternal happiness through complete surrender to the Will of God.

Absolute and uncompromising belief in One God is the central doctrine of Islam. *There is none worthy of worship but the One and Only God (Allah) Who possesses all excellences and Muhammad is His Messenger.* This is the most important doctrine of Islam.

Islam helps us to establish a permanent relationship with God to realize Him during our earthly life as our Helper and Guide in all our affairs.

Islam requires belief in all the prophets and spiritual guides including Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Krishna, Buddha, Confucius and Zoroaster. Islam represents the completion of the mission of *all the prophets of God came with one and the same mission*. Thus Islam establishes peace and unity between all religions.

The Holy Quran—the Muslim Scripture—was revealed to the Master Prophet Muhammad 1400 years ago and has been preserved intact without the slightest change. A large number of Muslims know the whole Book by heart. It is an inexhaustible treasure of spiritual truths capable of satisfying the needs of all people in all countries and all stations of life.

The establishment of true democracy and universal brotherhood without any discrimination of caste, creed, color or country is the unique and unrivalled distinction of Islam. Islam has fulfilled and realized the splendid principles of democracy in the actual life and action of human society.

According to Islam, life after death is a continuation of life on earth. Heaven and Hell begin right in this life. Heaven is eternal and everlasting, while hell is temporary. Hell is a hospital for the treatment of the human soul. As a soul is cured, it goes to Heaven. Heaven is the attainment of a life of everlasting progress and complete joy and happiness through union with God and by the development of the fine spiritual qualities and the unlimited capacities which have been implanted in human beings.

A few of the distinctive features of Islam are:

1. Liberation of women by establishing the equality of both sexes, safeguarding their rights and liberties and raising their status.
1. Absolute veto on all intoxicants.
3. Equitable solution of all economic problems.
4. Furnishing mankind with the noblest practical ethics.
5. Promotion of science and education.

Some of the obligatory duties laid down by Islam are:

1. Five daily Prayers.
2. Fasting in the month of Ramadhan.
3. Paying *Zakat* for the relief of poverty.
4. Pilgrimage to Mecca, once in one's lifetime, if circumstances allow.